

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method comprising the steps of:
receiving, from a host terminal, a request to set up a virtual conference;
determining selected attributes of the virtual conference;
5 retrieving information supporting the selected attributes, the information
defining virtual conference information;
sending at least a portion of the virtual conference information to a virtual
conference bridge; and
connecting the host terminal to the virtual conference bridge, thereby
10 establishing a virtual conference including at least the host terminal.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of retrieving information
comprises retrieving virtual conference information from a virtual conference
database.
- 15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of retrieving information
comprises retrieving virtual conference information from the host terminal, the virtual
conference information including one or more facial images of a host operating the
host terminal.
- 20 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining selected attributes
comprises receiving indicia of options selected via the host terminal.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving indicia of options
25 comprises receiving indicia of a selected room type, the step of retrieving information
comprising retrieving information associated with the selected room type from a
virtual conference database.
6. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving indicia of options
30 comprises receiving indicia of a selected outdoor environment, the step of retrieving
information comprising retrieving information associated with the selected outdoor
environment from a virtual conference database.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving indicia of options comprises receiving indicia of a selected presentation medium, the step of retrieving information comprising retrieving information associated with the selected presentation medium from a virtual conference database.

8. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving indicia of options comprises receiving indicia of a selected meeting room facility, the step of retrieving information comprising retrieving information associated with the selected meeting room facility from a virtual conference database.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving, from at least one participating terminal, a request to join the virtual conference; and
connecting the at least one participating terminal to the virtual conference bridge, thereby joining the at least one participating terminal to the virtual conference.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the step of retrieving information comprises retrieving virtual conference information from one or more of: the virtual conference database, the host terminal and the at least one participating terminal, the virtual conference information from the host terminal and the at least one participating terminal including facial images of operators of the host terminal and the at least one participating terminal.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
filtering the virtual conference information retrieved from one or more of: the virtual conference database, the host terminal and the at least one participating terminal, yielding filtered information; and
sending the filtered information to the virtual conference bridge.

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12. The method of claim 11, further comprising:
supplementing the filtered information, yielding supplemented filtered
information; and
sending the supplemented filtered information to the virtual conference bridge.

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13. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
supplementing the virtual conference information retrieved from one or more
of: the virtual conference database, the host terminal and the at least one participating
terminal, yielding supplemented retrieved information; and
10 sending the supplemented retrieved information to the virtual conference
bridge.

14. A method comprising:
establishing a virtual conference comprising a host terminal and one or more
15 participating terminals connected to a virtual conference bridge;
communicating virtual conference information among the host terminal and
one or more participating terminals via the virtual conference bridge.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of communicating virtual
20 conference information comprises sending images associated with a selected room
type to the host terminal and one or more participating terminals.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of communicating virtual
conference information comprises sending images associated with a selected outdoor
25 environment to the host terminal and one or more participating terminals.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of communicating virtual
conference information comprises sending images associated with a selected
presentation medium to the host terminal and one or more participating terminals.

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18. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of communicating virtual conference information comprises sending images associated with a selected meeting room facility to the host terminal and one or more participating terminals.

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19. A system comprising:

a switching center;

a virtual conference database; and

a virtual conference bridge,

the switching center being operable to retrieve virtual conference information

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from the virtual conference database and send the information to the virtual conference bridge, the switching center further being operable to connect a host terminal and one or more participating terminals to the virtual conference bridge, thereby establishing a virtual conference where the host terminal and participating terminals may receive the virtual conference information.

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20. The system of claim 19 wherein the virtual conference information comprises images associated with one or more of: a room type, an outdoor environment, a presentation medium and a meeting room facility,

the switching center being operable to retrieve selected images from the

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virtual conference database and send the selected images to the virtual conference bridge, the host terminal and participating terminals receiving the images upon connection to the virtual conference bridge.

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